

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 159
By Southerland

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Katherine Watson "Kay"
Leonard of Greeneville.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of the General Assembly should pause to specially memorialize those outstanding promoters of public schooling who have devoted their careers to providing the highest quality education for Tennessee's students; and

WHEREAS, Katherine Watson Leonard was one such estimable leader of this effort, and the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of her passing on February 22, 2005; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Leonard was an extremely talented and compassionate individual who distinguished herself as a professional of the greatest dedication, ability and integrity and performed her duties with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm, working assiduously to motivate the education community of Greeneville City to reach its full potential; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Leonard began her career with the Greeneville Board of Education in 1987 when she was appointed by the Greeneville Board of Mayor and Alderman, and since that time she earned the respect and admiration of students, parents, and administrators alike for the unsurpassed quality of her service; and

WHEREAS, she served as Board Secretary from 1987 to 1990, and as Treasurer from 1990 to 1991, immediately prior to being selected by her fellow Board members to be Chairman, a position she maintained until she stepped down in 2002; and

WHEREAS, under her tutelage, the Greeneville City School System became increasingly recognized as one of the premier school systems in the state; her extensive list of notable achievements include the well-planned and far-reaching renovations made at Greeneville High School, as well as upgraded facilities throughout the system; and

WHEREAS, working with an organization she helped establish in 1997, the Greeneville City Schools Foundation, as well as the Greeneville Schools Action Council and the Board of Mayor and Alderman, Mrs. Leonard spearheaded efforts to implement the school system's nationally recognized technology program; and

WHEREAS, as she advanced many successful initiatives during her notable career, Kay Leonard never failed to remember the immense value of also paying attention to seemingly less significant issues or needs, and she often attended to these matters selflessly, without others' knowledge and without others' praise; and

WHEREAS, this exceptional leader had long been recognized by community for her incomparable excellence; her many honors and accolades include the Tennessee School Boards Association's C. Hal Henard Outstanding Board Member Award in 1994, and she attained the Tennessee School Boards Association's Level V Boardsmanship Standing; and

WHEREAS, Greene County Partnership elected to honor her by naming its service award, given to outstanding educators, in her honor; and

WHEREAS, known throughout her community and her profession as a leader of the highest merit, Mrs. Leonard's astute guidance also resulted in accolades for the school board and entire system; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee School Boards Association named Greeneville's Board the Board of the Year in both 1992 and 2002, and the school system continues to be the first and only system to achieve Level Two of the Tennessee Quality Award, the State's affiliate of the Malcolm Baldrige Award Program; and

WHEREAS, her professional accomplishments aside, Mrs. Leonard was devoted to maintaining the highest ideals of family and community, and she was most grateful for the deep love and companionship she shared with her loving family; and

WHEREAS, she will be sorely missed by her husband, Terry; her sons, Watson and Bobby and his wife Ivy; her daughter, Kimerie Connard and her husband Joseph; and her granddaughters, Addie and Hanah Leonard and Katie and Ashley Connard; and

WHEREAS, appreciative of her many blessings, she selflessly shared her time and talents with the Asbury United Methodist Church, which she served faithfully for many years; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Leonard truly served as an inspiration to her colleagues and students alike, and her friendship and counsel were highly valued by those who were fortunate to know her; it has been expressed that "She had the unique ability to make those who came in contact with her better than they would have been had they not known her"; and

WHEREAS, Katherine Watson Leonard leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Katherine Watson "Kay" Leonard, a woman of quiet strength and unmatched competence, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character, her integrity, and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Kay Leonard.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.